

MONEYMAKERS

Some people make their money by making money. If that sounds strange, think of it this way: The people who work for the Bureau of Engraving and Printing (BEP) of the U.S. Department of the Treasury actually make money. Their job is to print all the paper dollars we use in the United States. When the BEP began in 1862, it was a single room in the basement of the Treasury building. Today, 2,600 people in Washington, D.C., and Fort Worth, Texas, work for the BEP, printing more than 6,000,000 bills each month!

Making money is a complicated process: Bills are designed. Metal plates for printing are made. Bills are printed on sheets and then cut. In fact, there are more than 65 steps in the process of making paper money. Along the way, the money is examined many times for problems or mistakes. (With 65 steps, there is a lot of room for error.)

MONEY MATH

Using a super-fast printing press, the BEP can print about 8,000 sheets of bills per hour. With 32 bills to a sheet, that's 256,000 bills per hour. For \$1 bills, that means \$256,000 per hour. Try multiplying 256,000 bills by \$5, \$20, and \$100. Then do a little more math to see how much money can be made in an 8-hour day. Whew! That's a lot of cash. (For \$1 bills, that's $256,000 \text{ bills per hour} \times \$1 \text{ per bill} \times 8 \text{ hours} = \$2,048,000$ in one 8-hour day.)



Inspecting sheets of newly printed \$1 bills



MINTING MONEY

What about coins? All of the coins issued by the U.S. government are made by the United States Mint. The two largest mints—in Denver and Philadelphia—make 65 to 80 million coins every day! Beginning in 1999, the Mint has issued five new quarters each year to honor five different states. By 2008, there will be 50 state quarters.

If you want to start collecting coins, the state quarters are a good place to start. Then you'll be a numismatist (say new-MISS-ma-tist), a coin collector.



Newly minted pennies

No Fake Bills

What do special paper (made of linen and cotton), color-shifting inks, security threads, and micro-printing have in common? They are all methods used by the BEP to stop people from making fake bills. Counterfeiting, or illegally making fake money, is a crime. Anyone caught doing it can go to jail.

With today's easy access to color photocopiers, the BEP had to come up with security features that don't copy well. Take a close look at a \$5.00 bill. Hold it up to the light. Can you see an image of Abraham Lincoln in the lower right-hand corner? This is a security feature. Tiny red and blue threads run through the bills; some of the inks change color as you look at them from different angles; and what appear to be thin lines are actually tiny words that can be read only with a magnifying glass. None of these things show up in counterfeit, photocopied bills.

FUN FACTS



The largest denomination of bills printed today is \$100. Bills for \$500, \$1,000, \$5,000, and \$10,000 exist too, but no new ones have been printed for many years.



As strong as paper money is, most \$1 bills last only 18 months. Bills for \$5 and \$10 last about the same time; larger denominations last longer.



Find out more by taking a tour of the BEP at www.moneyfactory.com and explore the U.S. Mint at www.usmint.gov/kids



When money gets too old or is torn, burned, or otherwise damaged, you can turn it in to the BEP for a crisp, new bill. If there is less than half of the bill left, you must show proof that the other half was destroyed.



Every year, people cash in more than \$30,000,000 in damaged currency for new bills. The Department of the Treasury shreds the old bills. So if you ever find a buried box of money, even if it's waterlogged or chewed by mice, you know what to do with it.

Adapted from an article by Amanda Yskamp



Introducing the new \$20 bill with improved security features